What Makes Someone Weird?
What do these men have in common?

Alan Turing  Albert Einstein  Bill Gates  Satoshi Tajiri
Neurodivergence
Why are we talking about this?

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✧ You will work with someone who is neurodivergent
✧ We are living in a global pandemic that is causing people to join the Neurodivergent Squad
✧ Neurodiversity is still somewhat of a taboo topic
Definitions

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✧ Neurodivergent: Having a less-typical, cognitive variation
✧ Common Divergences
  ✧ Autism Spectrum Disorder
    ✧ affects communication and behavior
  ✧ Dyspraxia
    ✧ affects fine and gross motor skills, motor planning, and coordination
  ✧ Dyscalculia
    ✧ affects learning or comprehending arithmetic
  ✧ Dyslexia
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    ✦ affects areas of the brain that process language
  ✧ ADHD
    ✦ causes attention issues, hyperactivity, and impulsiveness
  ✧ Tourette Syndrome
    ✦ causes repetitive movements or unwanted sounds
  ✧ Clinical Depression
    ✦ causes depressed mood or loss of interest in activities
  ✧ Anxiety Disorder
    ✦ causes worry, anxiety, or fear
Getting Diagnosed

✧ Diagnosis is a privilege
✧ The easiest way to get diagnosed is to be a white male not in poverty with stereotypical symptoms
   ✧ Even then misdiagnosis is frequent
✧ Self-diagnosis should be taken seriously
   ✧ Self-diagnosis is not “I can’t get myself to do dishes after school too. I must have ADHD.”
   ✧ Self-diagnosis is heavy research that leads to having all criteria needed for a formal diagnosis
Stimming

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  - Playing with hair
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- There are dangerous stims
  - Hitting themselves
  - The only reason someone should be corrected for stimming is if they are hurting themselves.
Masking

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  ✧ forcing or faking eye contact during conversations
  ✧ imitating smiles and other facial expressions
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THIS IS DANGEROUS

✧ Can cause anxiety and depression
✧ Can cause even more aggression and misunderstandings
✧ IT’S EXHAUSTING
Retracted Language

- Retarded- THIS IS A SLUR
  - “Mental Retardation” was a medical term
  - Turned into a slur for any and all people with learning disabilities
  - This term was coined in Vineland NJ. I was born at Newcomb Hospital in Vineland NJ. I went to school in Vineland NJ for over a decade. There is no reason you can give me for you to have this word in your vocabulary anymore.
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- Aspergers
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  - Asperger was a Nazi that created a criteria for which children get to live and which children were killed
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✧ Functioning Labels
  ◦ This is just stupid
  ◦ These labels were created to basically say how annoying a person is to neurotypical people
  ◦ They undercut a person's individuality, struggles, and abilities
  ◦ The correct language is focusing on support needs
Common Misconceptions

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✧ “Idiot Savant”
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- Neurodivergent people need to be taught to be Neurotypical
- Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) Therapy is a good thing
  - This is basically conversion therapy and like conversion therapy this is traumatizing
  - The only people that benefit from ABA therapy are the neurotypical people around the person
Is a Neurodiversity a Disability?
Models of Disability

✧ The Religious Model of Disability

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- **The Social Model of Disability**
  - Sees the issue of "disability" as a socially created problem and a matter of the full integration of individuals into society.
Disability Etiquette

✦ Most Disabled people hate “people first” language
  ✦ Idea is to “recognizes that individuals are more than their disabilities”
  ✦ For most of us, it's part of our identity
  ✦ It’s like saying Emily is a person with blonde haired instead of saying Emily is blonde
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✦ DO NOT ASSUME SOMEONE’S ABILITIES
✦ LISTEN TO DISABLED PEOPLE
  ✧ If you are not disabled, your opinion on disability does not matter. You do not know what someone goes through and therefore can not tell a person what is best for them
  ✧ Do not invalidate disabled people’s experiences
  ✧ Do not make jokes at the expense of disabled people. This is punching down.
Ask me anything about Neurodivergence

✦ No judgement
✦ Ignorance is ok